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### **PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLYING MANIFESTATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**

Berdiyeva Gulmira Jurayevna

Tashkent University of Social Innovations, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

#### **Abstract**

Bullying in the educational environment is one of the most pressing socio-psychological problems facing modern society. The prevalence of bullying among primary school-aged children is particularly alarming, as this is the period when the foundations of personality are laid, social skills, self-esteem, and interpersonal interaction patterns are formed. Early exposure to aggressive behavior from peers can have a long-term negative impact on a child's mental development, emotional state, academic motivation, and social adaptation.

**Keywords:** bullying, primary school age, aggressive behavior, victimization, school environment.

The problem of bullying in schools has attracted increasing attention from researchers, educators, and practicing psychologists in recent decades. Although bullying is traditionally associated with adolescence, modern research indicates its prevalence already in primary school. During this period, children develop new social roles and learn to build relationships with peers and adults, making them particularly vulnerable to various forms of psychological pressure and aggression.

This study is theoretical and analytical in nature and is based on a comprehensive analysis of modern scientific approaches to the study of bullying in primary school children. The research material includes scientific publications by



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international and Russian authors devoted to the problems of school bullying, the psychological characteristics of child development, the social adaptation of primary school students, and the prevention of aggressive behavior in the educational environment. The study includes more than 20 foreign and domestic scientific sources published in peer-reviewed journals, monographs, and collective works, primarily over the past 20 years. Particular attention is given to works indexed in international scientific databases (Scopus, Web of Science), as well as classic studies that laid the theoretical foundations for the study of bullying (Olweus, Smith, Salmivalli, etc.).

The selection process utilized the criteria of scientific significance, relevance, methodological validity, and empirically validated results. Works not directly related to the subject of the study, as well as publications containing descriptive or journalistic content without scientific analysis, were excluded.

The problem of bullying in the educational environment occupies a significant place in modern psychological and pedagogical science. Scientific interest in this phenomenon is driven by its persistent negative impact on the psychological development of individuals, social adaptation, and academic success of students. One of the first researchers to systematically study bullying was D. Olweus, who defined it as purposeful, repetitive aggressive behavior characterized by a power imbalance between the aggressor and the victim (Olweus, 1993). This definition became the basis for most subsequent research and formed the foundation of modern diagnostic and preventive programs.

The conducted analysis of scientific sources revealed a set of psychological characteristics characteristic of bullying in primary school-aged children. The obtained results confirm the position that bullying in this age period is formed based on a combination of the child's individual psychological characteristics and the characteristics of the social environment, primarily the school community.



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One of the key findings of the study is the establishment that the aggressive behavior of primary school children involved in bullying interactions is predominantly impulsive. This is due to the age-related immaturity of self-regulation mechanisms and the insufficient development of voluntary behavioral control and the emotional sphere. Children who act as bullies often exhibit reduced empathy, difficulty recognizing the emotional states of others, and a pronounced desire to dominate their peer group. These findings are consistent with international studies indicating a link between aggressive behavior and deficits in social and emotional competencies (Hymel & Swearer, 2015; Salmivalli, 2010).

This study analyzed theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of bullying in primary school children, allowing us to examine it as a complex, multifactorial socio-psychological phenomenon. It was established that bullying in this age group is determined by the combined influence of the child's individual psychological characteristics, the specific nature of interpersonal relationships within the children's group, and the conditions of the family and school environment. A review of scientific literature indicates that verbal and social forms of bullying predominate in primary school children, including teasing, insults, ignoring, and social isolation. These forms of aggression are predominantly covert, making them difficult to detect and requiring increased attention from educators and school psychologists. It has been found that children involved in bullying interactions exhibit specific psychological characteristics: aggressors exhibit reduced empathy and a desire for dominance, victims exhibit increased anxiety and self-doubt, and bystanders exhibit an insufficiently developed sense of social responsibility.



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